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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The New York "Sun" has discovered Walt Whitman.

Certain labor organizations in New York and Brooklyn have decided to boycott the militia and admit no applicants who are members of the national guard. This is the first sensible step taken by labor in a long time. Nothing is more disheartening and sickening than the spectacle of workmen perfectly familiar with the industrial conditions rushing to join their detachments for the purpose of shooting down other workmen. At least force the plutocrats to send their own sons to protect them against the violence of their desperate victims.

From the last issue and the present one other pressing and valuable matters have obliged me to omit "The Beauties of Government," much to my regret. It now looks as though I might have to omit them from one or two more issues. But I keep on collecting the material, and the readers of Liberty have responded effectively to my appeal for their coöperation in such collection; so that I now have a magnificent assortment. Let the collection grow. Continue to supply me with clippings. Even those that never find their way into the paper are very useful to me.

Explain the Spooner idea of a jury to an average lawyer, or layman pluming himself on familiarity with legal principles, and he will sneer at it as chimerical and fallacious. Nothing but facts will cure him of this disposition. Now, it appears that within a few weeks, among the important cases decided by the United States Supreme Court, was one hinging on this old question of whether juries are judges of fact only, or of law as well, in criminal cases. It would be uninteresting to state the involved facts of the case; the important point is that two of the justices dissented from the decision of the majority of the court on the ground that it denied the right of the jury to judge of the law as well as of the facts. This goes to show that Spooner's idea of a jury is not as whimsical as some of his critics seem to imagine.

The loud demands of the jingoists, and of editors who are patriotic "for circulation only," for more ships, soldiers, and territory, lead the Springfield "Republican" to make the excellent suggestion that the government should impose a special tax on these patriots, and give them what they want at their own expense. The income tax makes Dana furious; well, then, let him be made to pay a still higher tax, if he wants a larger army and navy. But does the "Republican" perceive that its suggestion is Anarchistic? If the jingoists are to pay for their ships, why should not other sections of the community pay for whatever they demand, leaving others free to withhold pay and dispense with governmental services? Let those who want police pay for them; let those who want schools pay for them; let those who want congress pay for it. Unless this principle is accepted, there is no way of suppressing the jingoists and busybodies.

How is it that so many of the so-called "sound money" papers in the East are strenuous in their defence of the greenbacks? Does it lie in their mouths to denounce as cranks and ignoramuses the fiatists of the West and South, when they themselves are determined to prevent the retirement of fiat money? The people love the greenbacks, say these speaking fiatists; well, then, why not have more of them, according to the demands of the government-currency champions? It is funny to see these humbugs trying to reconcile contradictory opinions. They tell us that the people don't pay interest on the floating loans represented by the greenbacks. But they are firm upholders of usury; why, then, is it right for us to retain money without paying interest for it? Again, they object to issues of bonds because the country is saddled with interest-paying debts; but these bonds are necessitated by the redemption of greenbacks in gold, and the interest is paid for the privilege of issuing and reissuing the alleged non-interest-bearing greenbacks! Really, it is impossible to credit these self-styled sound-money organs with any settled opinions, — good, bad, or indifferent. This is not an unmixed evil; we have a case of knavery tempered by muddle-headedness. It would be worse for us if they were more consistent in their plutocratic beliefs.

The vicious spirit of the press is strikingly exemplified by the following utterance of the Philadelphia "Telegraph" (a paper exhibiting considerable independence in politics) in connection with the Brooklyn strike: "They have been induced to put themselves beyond the pale of the law, and in that position they inevitably attract all the lower elements of society habitually abiding beyond the pale of the law. All the thieves, pickpockets, hoodlums, plug-uglies, robbers, roughs, and rogues; all the political desperadoes, Anarchists, dynamiters, Socialistic speculators, red-revolutionists, and disciples of W. D. Howells and Professor Ely; in short, all the criminals and idlers and good-for-nothings within walking distance, — will be attracted to the scene of the strike disturbances as surely as crows to carrion." One has indeed to be not only vicious, but blind and stupid, to imagine that such brutal talk will help the cause of the conservatives. This trick of applying the epithets Anarchist and red-revolutionist to any one expressing dissatisfaction with present conditions has an effect directly opposite to that intended. The "disciples of W. D. Howells and Professor Ely" are not terrorized into abjuring their beliefs and returning to the ranks; but many of those who feel the outrageous injustice of this indiscriminate abuse are impelled to leave the ranks and make common cause with the reformers. The violence and malice of the reactionary press are doing good work for radicalism. Let the fanatics continue to undermine their own citadel.

There is no violation of Egoistic propriety in distinguishing between inferior and superior forms of human nature, Mr. Byington to the contrary notwithstanding. The human being acquires new tastes as his organism develops in delicacy and complexity, and there is no reason why the fact should not be stated. The Egoist objects to the assumption of superiority only where the assumption is false. It is false when the Moralist assumes superiority because he is unselfish, or thinks he is unselfish, the fact being that the Moralist is precisely as selfish as the rest of mankind — or brutekind, for that matter. To the Moralist a man is not high or low according to his loves and hates. He can only be high unless he loves that which is considered low and at the same time deliberately and conscientiously avoids it. Kant distinctly says that there is no virtue in any act that is not performed at a (fancied) sacrifice of inclination. The Egoistic view is just the opposite. To the Egoist no man is really virtuous save he who possesses those tastes which belong to a high degree of development and who is able to live an admirable life without (fancied) sacrifice of his inclinations. If Mr. Byington really preferred quail on toast, but nevertheless insisted on tackling an Archist half-back in order to crucify himself, he would be a moral man according to Kant and not the highest type of man according to Tucker; but since he actually and consciously obeys his preference in tackling the Archist half-back, Kant would have to consider him immoral, while Tucker considers him high (by which remarks, however, Tucker must not be understood as depreciating quail on toast).

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Spencer's Defence of "Robbery."

Liberty once charged the editor of a Spencerian journal with a "brutish admiration for Spencer," and I am free to confess that, in many respects, I have been, and still am, open to the same charge. But Spencer's treatment of certain social problems certainly fails to command the least respect of unbiassed and logical thinkers, if it does not come perilously near provoking contempt. The sincerest friends of Spencer prefer to pass over in silence his amazing self-stultification in connection with the subject of land tenure, — a self-stultification lately again forced by him upon our notice. In the course of a controversy with the English land-nationalizers, who had inflicted great annoyance on Spencer by persistent use of his name in their propaganda, he wrote a letter to the London "Chronicle" in explanation of his change of opinion on the land question, which was significantly headed "Robbers All Round" (to the cynic it doubtless irrepressibly suggests another expressive motto, "humbugs all round"). The gist is contained in the following passage:

> My argument in "Social Statics" was based upon the untenable assumption that the existing English community had a *moral* right to the land. They never had anything of the kind. They were robbers all round: Normans robbed Danes and Saxons, Saxons robbed Celts, Celts robbed the aborigines, traces of whose earth-houses we find here and there. Let the English Land Restoration League find the descendants of these last, and restore the land to them. There never was any equity in the matter, and reëstablishment of a supposed original equity is a dream. The stronger peoples have been land-thieves from the beginning, and have remained land-thieves down to the present hour.

The inference intended is obvious: it is silly to dream of, and criminal to attempt, a change in the system of land tenure apart from the free acquiescence of the present holders. The fact that the landlords are not ethically entitled to their possessions does not invest other classes of the community with a superior title, since from the very beginning "they were robbers all round." Nothing remains to be done except persuade the landlords (or force them under the theory of "eminent domain," recognized by Spencer in his latest work on sociology) to *sell* their estates to the community. No, not even this remedial plan is left to comfort us, for Spencer has, by a remarkable appeal to arithmetic, shown the ruinous nature of such a speculation. More would be paid to the landlords, according to him, than their lands would ever be worth, and the result of the transaction would be a loss offset by no advantage whatever. The happiest solution is to leave matters in *statu quo* and — pray for the best. Mr. Auberon Herbert eagerly and gleefully seizes upon Spencer's defence, and develops it with keen relish, thus:

> If there were a true "equity" in taking land from its present holders, there would be further equity in dividing up all Europe, and indeed Asia also. If we are to divide up, why is one race to be worse off than another race? It will want some very persuasive logic to convince the Russian — since the faulty origins of land settlement everywhere are to be made an excuse for breaking up present arrangements — that he is to stay in the frosts and the snows. . . . . "There never has been equity" is the true history of the whole transaction; and how what has been throughout inequitable could be mended by another glaring act of inequity only a nationalizer can explain. The free and open market is the one equitable system, and through all past violences and inequities we must slowly make our way up to that goal.

The gratuitous assumptions, transparent sophistry, and loose thinking characterizing these quotations from Spencer and Auberon Herbert are such that a person who was not aware of the intellectual status of these men would be abundantly justified in dismissing them as unworthy of serious consideration. Let us analyze the propositions and the deductions drawn from them.

Bear in mind that the problem is to secure, if possible, equity in land tenure. Spencer assures us that equal freedom is the first condition of social stability and harmony, and equity and expediency are really synonymous terms. Now, still according to Spencer, under the law of equal freedom, men — each and all — are entitled to certain particular freedoms or rights, and *one* of these rights is that of using land and other natural media. To tell us that one of these rights is unattainable, and that we had better cease our vain agitation for it, is tantamount to discrediting the so-called law of equal liberty altogether. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and, if one clear and unescapable corollary from the law of equal freedom is invalid, inexpedient, inequitable, impossible, the whole law is shown to be a sham and fallacy. It ceases to be a law. There is no way of rehabilitating it, except by proving that the alleged right to natural media is not strictly a deduction from the law, but a false conclusion illogically drawn from it. Were this done, it would devolve on Spencer to reason out and formulate the proper and true injunction of equal freedom with regard to the question of natural media. Since, however, he still insists that, in the abstract, the right to the use of nature *is* a corollary from equal freedom, his assertion that men cannot equitably obtain a recognition of this particular right under existing conditions involves the total collapse of the whole edifice. Spencer's sociology and political system are a wreck, and all his talk about justice, equity, and social law is cant and empty sound.

But perhaps I am too hasty. Reflection discovers another possible solution of the dilemma. Let us assume that neither the major premise or the minor premise of Mr. Spencer can be successfully impugned, and see what the conclusion must be.

Major premise: Under the law of equal freedom, — the fundamental condition of society, — men are entitled to the use of the land, — satisfaction of needs, or use, being the criterion.

Minor premise: The law of equal freedom having been systematically violated from the beginning, it is now utterly impossible to establish equity in land tenure.

Conclusion: Society must perish as the victim of its own folly and wickedness.

Grant the premises, and there is no avoidance of the conclusion. Society cannot long survive the violation of a fundamental law; war, chaos, and savagery must naturally be unchained and let loose. A glance at the actualities around us attests the absolute correctness of this conclusion. Bombs, violent strikes, advocacy of wholesale massacres, — all are the direct result of the violation of the "fundamental condition," and all proclaim the existence of a state of war. Ignoramuses are appalled at the spectacle, and rave about the fiendishness of the poor and working classes; rascals are aware of the true causes, but pretend ignorance and strive to get the spoils of war. But the intelligent and conscientious are endeavoring to secure observance of the fundamental condition as a means of establishing peace. And what assistance do they now get from Spencer? He virtually abandons the scene of the struggle, and leaves society to its doom. Such an attitude, however justifiable on the part of a theologian who despairs of enforcing God's will, is irrational and inconsistent on the part of an evolutionist. An evolutionist can never despair of securing obedience to a social law. It is by studying human conduct that he discovers the law, and he knows that the very misery produced by imperfect observance of it is the best school in which men learn the need of stricter conformity.

But to recur to Spencer's reason for discontinuing attacks on the present land system. Nobody, he declares, has a better title than the present holders; there has never been equity in the transaction. Now, this assertion requires much more evidence than Spencer has thus far supplied. Some writers on early English tenures maintain that there existed at one time in that country a peasant proprietorship which closely approximated equitable requirements. They may have robbed the aborigines, just as the first American settlers robbed the Indians; but Spencer ought to be the last man to introduce such a dubious and uncertain element into a discussion of equitable land tenure. No attempt has yet been made to define, in the light of justice and equity, the right relation between civilized societies and uncivilized tribes. Kindness and gentleness have often been urged on white invaders of new territory inhabited by savages, but kindness is not justice. Expropriation of savages is not necessarily robbery; from the standpoint of the race, it would seem to be unjust for a few thousands to monopolize land capable of sustaining millions.

All this, however, is said merely in passing,

by way of showing the unphilosophical, un-Spencerian way in which these assertions are piled on to prop up a foregone conclusion. Let us concede that there never has been any equity in the appropriation of the land, and that, therefore, there can be no question of *restoration*. Let us admit that none of the holders *in the past* had any better title than those now owning the land. Does that relieve us from the necessity, or deprive us of the right, of *establishing* equity here and now, — of making a new departure? Having learned to comprehend equity, ought we not to realize it? Our ancestors may have been all both robbers and idiots; but we, who glory in our abstract conceptions as well as in our strong sentiments, have certainly no reason for acquiescing in inequity. In our efforts to secure equal freedom, we are bound to adjust the relations of men to natural media along with the other changes embraced in our programme. Are we to strive for all rights *except* the right to land? What has become of *our* right to land?

Yes, replies Spencer, this is precisely what we must do. Equity in land-ownership is a dream. We cannot justly expropriate present holders *without* compensation, while any fair compensation would entail greater burdens than society could bear. The rejoinder to this is that, even if the computation yielding such a curious result were not extremely faulty, — and it *is*, — the dilemma would have no terrors for us. The State may be under some obligation to compensate the landlords, but the people are certainly not, and they are in no way responsible for the State. They are not endorsers or guarantors, and are entirely free to repudiate the State's promises. In other words, I am audacious enough to hint at expropriation by the people without compensation. The landlords, you admit, are robbers; well, then, robbers have no title, and those to whom the land belongs under equal freedom will take it. A good many sensible and intelligent people are appalled at such a "revolutionary" suggestion, but they may be safely left to the enlightening influences of time and tide. Their wrath will be great, no doubt, but their children will recognize the justice of the "revolution." An amusing and striking proof of this is at hand. One of the stanchest supporters of the present pseudo-individualist *régime*, the New York "Evening Post," says, in referring to inroads of State Socialism in France, that "one of the greatest results of the French Revolution, which must be duly weighed in reckoning up the good and evil of that mighty convulsion," is that "it at least broke down the feudal land laws of France and made land-owners out of two millions who were serfs." Should anybody suggest a "mighty convulsion" against modern landowners which might make landowners of millions of men who are little better, or much worse, than serfs, of course the "Post" would foam at the mouth and call for the immediate imprisonment of the dangerous rebel. But that need not cause anybody any uneasiness. The "Posts" of the future would praise the mighty convulsion of the end of the nineteenth century, and point to the change of land tenure as one of its greatest results.

Let those who gravely talk about the duty of compensating landlords explain why the people are bound to carry out the contracts of an invasive, corrupt, and inefficient State resting on violence and living on plunder. Were the people under any obligation to compensate the slave-holding class? Yet the State was as clearly bound to compensate the slaveholders as it is to compensate the landlords, for every argument employed in the latter behalf can be applied in defence of the former.

Auberon Herbert begs the question in saying that what has been throughout inequitable cannot be mended by another inequity. By denying, with Spencer, that there was an original equity in land-ownership, you do not at all weaken the case of those who claim, not by a title derived from past holders, but by a title conferred directly on themselves by the law of equal freedom. It is *not* an act of inequity to expropriate the "robbers" now in possession; nor is the act intended to mend any past inequity. It is intended to assert the valid title of present claimants, who are not land thieves, and who wish to put an end to land-thieving by recognizing none but equitable titles hereafter.

A curious contrivance is the human mind. Nothing in nature is more marvellous than its capacity for inconsistency and self-contradiction. The wild nonsense, the impossible mental gymnastics, to which men were driven by their attempts to reconcile slavery with equity are now paralleled in the attempts to protect landlordism against the assaults of modern reformers. These attempts, however, excite amusement rather than indignation. V. Y.

Spencerian Ethics and the Land.

From the Spencerian standpoint the foregoing article is a sound criticism of Mr. Spencer. Mr. Yarros is a believer in Mr. Spencer's absolute ethics, and he is successful in establishing a flat contradiction between Mr. Spencer's ethics and his attitude of practical acquiescence in land monopoly. Readers of the article, however, should distinctly understand that Liberty, unlike Mr. Yarros, is not a believer in Mr. Spencer's absolute ethics, and consequently does not base its opposition to land monopoly thereupon. Liberty does not believe that there is a *law* of equal freedom, in the sense in which Mr. Yarros uses the term *law*. The contract to observe and enforce equal freedom is, in Liberty's eyes, simply an expedient adopted in consequence of the discovery that such observance and enforcement is the best, nay, the only means by which men can steadily and securely and harmoniously avail themselves of the highest advantages of life. This discovery is not invalidated as a general truth by the necessity which arises, in special cases and under peculiar and abnormal circumstances, of doing violence to equal freedom, any more than the general truth that it is more economical to travel the straight road is invalidated by the necessity of occasionally making a *détour*. It is sometimes absolutely necessary for the Anarchist to become Archist, to abandon for the moment the guiding rule of his life, and to coerce the non-invasive individual. For instance, a hostile army is marching on a community of Anarchists. This army is composed in part of would-be invaders and in part of innocent men conscripted by a government and forced to bear arms and march by the side, or perhaps in front, of the invaders. The Anarchists *must*, in self-defence and to avoid being killed or enslaved, open fire upon this attacking army, knowing well that their fire will kill or wound, not only the invaders, but the innocent, the non-invasive. No believer in absolute ethics, holding that to declare the expediency of departing in a single instance from the observance of equal freedom is to deny that equal freedom is a law, can confront the problem which this attacking army raises, give these hypothetical facts unprejudiced consideration, and still maintain that equal freedom is a law.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Yarros actually do maintain this, and they maintain further that, as a corollary of this law, all men have an equal right to the land; of course, then, Mr. Yarros may properly complain when Mr. Spencer refuses to enforce this equal right to land. Liberty joins Mr. Yarros in charging this inconsistency, but it does not join him in advocacy of the dogma that men have an equal right to land. While Liberty would not hesitate, in case of necessity, to deviate from equal freedom, in dealing with the land question it finds itself confronted by no such necessity, for to Liberty, as has been stated in these columns before, equal freedom means, not equal freedom to use land, in the sense that all land or land values must be distributed equally among all men, but equal freedom to control self and the results of self-exertion.

We are here, on earth. Not one of us has any right to the earth. But every one of us *must* use the earth, and means to do so. To secure ourselves in this use, each contracts, or will ultimately contract, with his fellows not to encroach upon those portions of the earth which they are actually using, in return for their agreement not to encroach upon that portion of the earth which he is actually using. By this contract, and by similar contracts pertaining to other matters, each becomes secure in his person, in his property, and in control of his product. Such security = equal liberty. But it is not necessarily equality in the use of the earth.

In Liberty's view, the occupancy-and-use theory of land tenure is as inconsistent with Spencerian ethics as is the existing system of land tenure. Spencerian ethics requires the believers therein to adopt some method, be it Communism, or Land Nationalization, or the Single Tax, of giving to all men equal use of the entire earth. Of course, no method can possibly accomplish that result; but that only shows the absurdity of the Spencerian ethics. Liberty thinks that Mr. Spencer can answer Mr. Yarros: *Tu quoque*. T.

Fruits of the "Reform Wave."

Having elected a "reform" administration in the State and city of New York, the innocent believers in "good government" expected to fold their arms and enjoy the fruits of their arduous labors in the shape of pure politics. Alas! they are bitterly disappointed. No sooner was Tammany "crushed" than a Republican boss and machine stepped cynically into its place and proceeded to re-enact the Tammany performances under another name. The great Lexow committee, in obedience to Boss Platt, submitted a report which made the reformers froth at the mouth, so lame and impotent were its conclusions, so impudent was

its treatment of the dear, confiding public. Betrayed, mocked, and defied, the poor reformers are now constrained to resort to "indignation mass meetings" and similar demonstrations as a means of compelling the "reform legislature" to carry out "the will of the people." Mass meetings have no terrors for politicians when elections are far off. The reform movement will end in smoke, and the only way to punish the bosses will be to return to power their rivals, recently dislodged. Very amusing is the solution of the trouble offered by the New York "Evening Post," which traces the power of the bosses and the machines to their control over the purses of the wealthy corporations. It says:

> So long as the present system is maintained, we shall be in a constant struggle with the legislature, seeking to get by popular uprisings and mass meetings what we supposed we were getting through popular elections. A more grotesque method of government by the people could not be imagined. The responsibility for the situation does not rest on Platt, for he is the mere agent, but upon the corporations that furnish him with the money without which he would be powerless. A quickening of moral sense among the contributors would be the surest way to destroy the system.

This is delicious. If the system cannot be destroyed except by quickening the moral sense of the corporations paying blackmail and buying legislation or immunity, according to circumstances, then the outlook for reform is gloomy indeed. If the "Post" remembers how difficult it is for a rich man to go to heaven it ought not to be a hard matter for it to form an idea of the easy practicability of its remedy. V. Y.

The Law of Monetary Value.

In comment on Mr. Byington's letter on "The Value of Mutual Money," I can say at once that with him I should oppose any legal restriction of the denominations of the notes issued by mutual banks. It is probable that Colonel Greene himself would oppose such restriction, were he alive today. It must be remembered that his "Mutual Banking" is an economic rather than a political treatise, and was written at a time when the philosophy of Anarchy had been scarcely heard of in this country. Nevertheless I consider it an exaggeration to say that Greene, to keep mutual bank notes at par, "would depend *wholly*" on this restriction, or even on the customers' contract to take the notes at par with the standard. I have not a copy of "Mutual Banking" at hand, and do not remember whether there is any sentence in it which warrants Mr. Byington's statement; but, even if there is, it is none the less an exaggeration (by the author himself) of his real position. For the customers' willingness to make this contract depends in turn upon their knowledge that the notes will ultimately command their face value at the bank. As soon as the general public, through time and experience, becomes possessed of this knowledge, the customers' contract may be dispensed with without the least impairment of the value of the notes. The restriction and the contract were, in Greene's mind, only devices for making plain to the public the truth upon which he placed his *real* dependence, — *viz.*, that, if the original borrower of the notes should fail to meet his obligations to the bank, the security for the notes would be converted into the actual commodity adopted as standard, and this commodity used in redemption of the notes. It is this great fact that will always keep mutual bank notes at par. And it will do this whether the standard is actually coined and in circulation, or not. Nothing is needed but the standard's presence in the market as a commodity. The market quotations of the price of gold per grain serve the purpose as well as the actual circulation of coined dollars.

Mr. Byington's plan for keeping the notes at par doesn't make as great an impression upon me as it did upon his professor of political economy. He seems to think he has made a discovery. But all that is true in his plan is old and has long been accepted as a matter of course, while all that is new in it is in flat contradiction with the cardinal truth about mutual money which distinguishes it vitally and eternally from all forms of fiat money. Outside of those who deny the possibility of a standard of value (a quantity which may safely be neglected), no believer in mutual banking within my knowledge ever dreamed of appraising the property pledged as security in anything but the standard. It is largely for this purpose that a standard is necessary. A safe ratio of notes issued to standard valuation of security is another point that the defenders of mutual banking regularly insist upon. Greene urges two dollars of security for each dollar-note. Competition between the banks will fix this ratio. Those banks adopting a ratio which unduly sacrifices neither safety or enterprise will get the business. These two points of Mr. Byington's plan — appraisal in terms of standard and ratio of issue to appraisal — are very good, and they have grown gray in their goodness. But, when he assumes that the value of the notes issued will be regulated by their supply and demand, he becomes a financial heretic of the worst description.

There is nothing more certain (and oftener denied) in finance than the statement which Colonel Greene, in "Mutual Banking," prints in small capitals, — that mutual money differs from merchandise money (and, I may add, from fiat money also) in that it is absolutely exempt from the operation of the law of supply and demand. Be there more of it, or be there less, the value of each note remains the same. The hypothesis of free and mutual banking excludes on the one hand any legal limitation of the supply of currency whereby each note would acquire an extra value due to the enforced scarcity of the tool of exchange, and, on the other hand, any inflation of the currency to a volume exceeding the basis or sufficiently approaching the limit of the basis to inspire an appreciable fear that the notes are in danger from a possible depreciation of the security. Now, within these limits no change in the volume of the currency can by any possibility affect the value of the individual paper dollar. The value of the paper dollar depends not at all upon the demand and supply of paper dollars, but altogether upon the demand and supply of the kinds of property upon which the paper dollars rest. And, unless these kinds of property themselves depreciate sufficiently to endanger the notes, each paper dollar is worth a standard dollar, neither more or less. Mr. Byington's plan for maintaining this parity by providing steadiness in the demand and supply of notes is worthless, then, for two reasons: first, of itself it could do nothing toward accomplishing its purpose; second, without it its purpose is otherwise accomplished. I do not know how to respond to Mr. Byington's request that I describe more fully the method of this accomplishment. If he will try to point out just what it is that he does not understand, I will try to make him understand it. T.

A Politician's Doubts.

In another column Mr. Labadie quotes from and very well answers a letter from a friend who finds difficulties that prevent him, as he says, from accepting "some of the extreme deductions of Anarchy." An examination of the letter shows, however, that what he really refuses to accept is not Anarchy's extreme deductions, but Anarchy's fundamental doctrine, — that of no coercion of the non-invasive individual. That is to say, he starts by acknowledging the State, which Anarchism defines as "the embodiment of invasion in an individual, or band of individuals, assuming to act as representatives or masters of the entire people within a given area." This assumption of mastership is the prime act of invasion, and stands as such, no matter how liberal the policy of the State may be after its invasive establishment and maintenance; and in accepting this initial invasion Mr. Labadie's friend abandons the very foundation of Anarchism and permanently sets aside equal liberty as a guiding principle.

But he says that it is necessary to do so, — that life is not possible otherwise. Now, if it really is necessary to do so, I shall be with him in favor of doing so; but in that case I shall frankly recognize that I have adopted the policy of invasion, and not try to cheat myself into the belief that I am still libertarian by the use of any such vain phrase as "compulsion, not necessarily invasion." For this initial tribute-compelling establishment of the State is compulsion applied, not only to invaders, but to non-invaders as well, and therefore is itself invasion.

But it is not necessary to acknowledge the State's authority, and, as Mr. Labadie well points out, the reason his friend supposes it to be necessary is that he shares the politician's incapacity to appreciate the broad view of the philosopher, and so cannot imagine any realization of that view except it come in the politician's fashion, — that is, all at once, on some election day. Now, the method of the philosopher is not the method of the politician or of the people, and he is not so foolish as to expect either politician or people to adopt his method. It is the business of the social philosopher to exhibit society as it should be, all its branches harmonizing with a fundamental social principle. When he has once arrived at his principle, he traces its applications, and, having traced them all, declares. Society, in the main, should be thus and so.

Now, if all men were philosophers, it would be perfectly possible for them to make social action conform to equal liberty, even in the city of Chicago. For this would imply a degree of intelligence, a degree of appreciation of the necessity of narrowing community functions to those in which the force of competition can come into play only with the greatest difficulty,

which, coupled with the right to refuse to pay taxes, would make it unnecessary for dissenters to insist upon setting up a rival community power. The work of the municipality would be so simple, and the slightest abuse would be so quickly met by a withdrawal of supplies, that no other check would be needed.

But all men are not philosophers, and hence things are not done in this way. The politician and the voter do not arrive at a principle which they then proceed to apply. They have no power of generalization, and their breadth of view is only sufficient for the comprehension of the fact immediately before them. They see an evil, and they try experiments in search of a remedy. After many failures, they finally happen to try liberty in that particular matter. It works well, and the special problem is solved, or as nearly solved as it is possible to solve one problem alone when it is intimately connected with other problems. But now it does not occur to the politician or the voter that it would be a good thing to try liberty in all matters. They have not brains enough for so intricate a logical process. They experiment again at another point, until they finally find that liberty is the cure there also. And so on, point by point, until authority has been lopped away, branch by branch, and only the root is left. This, which the philosopher attacks first, the politician and the voter attack last. Consequently, *in practice*, the central theory of the State itself is not challenged until the State has been so reduced and simplified that it is then an easy matter to substitute voluntary for compulsory taxation and to secure the voluntary adhesion of all to the single and simple administrative body that remains. This, however, does not in the least invalidate the philosopher's claim that it is an invasion for any man or majority to assume and exercise authority over all the people within a given area. And it is important to insist upon this claim because it is the theoretical centre of the libertarian or Anarchistic position, by branching out from which we perceive that liberty is the cure for social evils. And it is because a few find out this truth by a philosophical method that the unphilosophical are sometimes induced to try the experiment of liberty at a particular point. It may sooner or later cause even Mr. Labadie's friend to perceive that there is plenty of banana-peel in the streets of Chicago, in spite of the law that prohibits its deposit there, and that the way to reduce this evil to a minimum is not to attempt the enforcement of so ridiculous and impossible an ordinance, but to cut off the salaries of the street-cleaners until they conclude to do their work promptly, thoroughly, and continuously. But now Mr. Labadie's friend, knowing that there is a law against banana-peel, proudly walks the streets of his beloved city wrapped in contemplation of its manifold beauties, calmly confident that no treachery can illegally lurk beneath his feet, and will doubtless continue to do so until some day his feet slide outward and sundry broken bones destroy his faith in the omnipotence of law.

T.

Life in Boston grows funnier. Young man — theological student — goes to Sunday night "sacred" concert to secure evidence of its non-sacredness. Young man — theological student — secures evidence; appears before committee of the Truly Good; questioned variously, says he heard nothing of a sacred nature sung at said concert; further questioned, what did he hear? says he heard song relating to the shortness of a pair of pants worn by person named McGilligan; did not think song sacred; further questioned by manager of theatre, did he not hear the "Ave Maria" sung? says he did; would he not call that sacred? couldn't say; did he know the meaning of "Ave Maria"? did not. Consternation, exit of young man witness — theological student.

One More Anarchist.

The Boston "Globe" of February 3 published a symposium on the subject: "Is It Better to Be Born Rich or Poor?" The leading contribution was from the pen of Mr. J. Morrison-Fuller, who founded and for several years edited an independent organ of the Spencerian philosophy, "Today," — a journal no longer in existence. Between "Today" and Liberty, which held much in common, there were nevertheless numerous controversies, one of which concerned interest on capital, "Today" upholding it. Below is reprinted the article from the "Globe" symposium, showing that Mr. Morrison-Fuller has become convinced that Liberty's opposition to interest is well-founded:

A few years ago, when I had given less attention to industrial relations than now, I maintained, in conversation with a friend, that, if wealth was really injurious to the individual, nature would doubtless apply its well-known selective prerogative to remove from our midst those who had either the faculty or desire for acquiring it. Nature has a way of its own which in this case does not seem very obscure.

At that time I was ready to believe that the only remedy for the evil of inherited wealth lay in just this condition: that, by not being trained in the most fundamental of all activities, the self-preservative (to put the question in biological language), the heirs of wealthy men — generally their descendants — would be slowly perhaps, but surely extirpated. If, as a fact, the development of the faculties that fit the individual for life requires the exercise of those faculties, — and no other means of development has ever been indicated, — then it follows that the non-exercise of these fundamental faculties must lead to their abortion, and that the acquisitiveness of the millionaire entails extinction upon his offspring.

To this view there are several rejoinders which cannot be examined here. I can only say that I see no reason to doubt the reality of the correlation above indicated, — that inherited wealth is injurious for the individual by exempting him from the activities which alone give exercise to the most fundamental of all faculties, and that the dispersion of the wealth is the *sine qua non* of the survival of the family.

For reasons too complex to be sifted here, I do not any longer regard this correlation as the only remedy for the evils of inherited wealth. When all is said, I hark back to the reply made by my friend several years ago, when I knew less of industrial relations than now: Men will cease to accumulate fortunes, and hence to transmit them, when they are no longer able to accumulate wealth.

Wherever the Anarchist starts in, he naturally comes round in the end to his eternal *Delenda est Carthago*: Cut off the sources of wealth at the twin fountain of monopoly, rent and interest, and then we shall not be vexed with deciding whether inherited wealth (read exemption from remunerative labor) is or is not injurious for the individual.

The Nucleus of a Mutual Bank.

The following extract from the St. Louis "Chronicle" of February 12 is only the more interesting and significant because the Mr. Clarke who takes the initiative in the financial experiment described is in no way connected with Liberty's work. Mr. Clarke's beginning is necessarily crude and simple, but the principle upon which his enterprise is based is thoroughly sound.

If Uncle Sam will not increase the currency, there are other ways of doing it, as F. F. Clarke, of 7115½ South Broadway, says he will show.

Treasury notes and greenbacks, silver and gold, are alike unimportant to the Carondelet financier. The thousand perplexities of bimetallism will never bother him. He is a single standard advocate of the most pronounced type. His standard, however, is somewhat unique, being labor or the products of labor in their most elementary form.

Mr. Clarke is organizer and first president of the Carondelet Labor Exchange, which embodies his financial views. The Exchange received its State charter December 18, but just held its first meeting.

Its membership may consist of all true workingmen, — that is, those whose work is productive, and not speculative. On joining, each member deposits some article of value, such as a chair, table, etc., for which he receives a certificate or due-bill naming the article and its appraised value. This article may be recovered at any time by a holder of the certificate, or, if it has been sold, its value will be returned in legal tender.

In order to give the certificates a circulation, each member pledges himself at all times to accept them at their face-value in the payment of debts. Besides the members, a number of the largest stores, among them being Humphrey's, Blanke Brothers, Rice-Stix, and others, have agreed to receive them.

"The advantages of the Exchange," says Mr. Clarke, "are apparent at first sight. A stable market is furnished for all the products of labor, and a currency is floated which cannot fluctuate at the will of money brokers. We will be able to dispose of the article we receive more easily than the workmen themselves, because we will be more widely known and will know just exactly where to go with our wares. As the Exchange grows larger, we expect to have a wood yard and issue certificates for the work done.

"Some of the other unions have even gone to the extent of building houses by paying the workmen with certificates. These houses are sold at a good profit, and at the same time work has been furnished to the needy.

"We have received more encouragement in St. Louis than I expected. Grocers, butchers, photographers, bakers, and dry-goods men are all numbered among our members."

The Rule of Behavior.

[George E. Macdonald in the Truth Seeker.]

The prophets of the old and the prophets of the new are all at sea when they enter the domain of behavior. (1) The servants of Christ hold that immortality is the foundation of morality; but upon this it ensues that, immortality not being of this world, there is no earthly basis for morality. (2) The enlightened ones instruct us to do right because it is right to do right; in saying which they are as lucid as the philosophers who explained that cold was cold because it was cold. They might avoid tautology without sacrifice of clearness by contenting themselves with saying we should do right because. Proceed, O Ananda, to follow the line of conduct which experience has proved to be conducive to human well-being, but fortify yourself for intelligent defence, whether accused of doing wrong or right.

In Praise of Liberty.

[The Conservator.]

We celebrate thy glory, Liberty,
In stately periods; we fill the air
With shouts; to what is highest and most fair —
A star, a sun, a goddess, or a sea —
We liken thee, oh Heart's Desire; but thee
Thyself — wild, strong, and brave, thy floating hair
A flame among the hills which some, who dare
Thy joy and peril, follow and are free,
Free in their free souls which no chain can bind —
We know thee not — 'tis but a bloodless ghost.
But let *me* know thee, goddess; let me find
That star, that sun, that strange sea's farthest coast;
Let me tread all thy ways with steadfast soul
That knows no bonds save its own strong control.

Wayland Hyatt Smith.

A Disconnected Preface.

Shall the business man be allowed to praise his work, and shall the artist not be allowed? Doubtless Art should be above the market; but, if it be not, what then? The inventor may say of his machine that "it is the best in the world" (every machine has at least that small merit), but the artist must deprecate and depreciate and hide his face with much modesty and hire some other man to magnify and explain! In all this the element of hypocrisy is not lacking, I think; and at any rate I run my risk and set a new fashion herewith.

In all frankness, reader, I am going to talk to you about my songs, and the book of them that I wish to print and for which I wish you to subscribe.

Not till I was almost a man did I write verses. I stumbled upon the art in sport, — an accident, as it were, — but, once found, I could not lose it. The new delight thrilled me, the new expression enlarged me. I was listening, and here was music; I was athirst, and here was nectar; I hungered, and with this I could feed myself. My failures tempted me more than my successes. I could not desist till I had done better work, — till the inner music rang true to the outward ear. And my victories flushed me with triumph.

The art grew upon me and became a habit, and as the years went on it was the solace of my care, the safety-valve of my emotion, the one interest which never flagged, the magic which translated every experience, dark or fair, into a picture and a song.

Long before I knew that Emerson had ever written "the poet also resigns himself to his mood," I had learned to thus resign myself, and my poems became, as I have described them elsewhere, "many songs in many moods." I learned to respect my instincts and innate impulses. I guided my life by reason, but not with too much faith. In my moods, when my spirit was fluent with music, I recognized that the inherited experience of my ancestors was moving also to expression, and often I gave it room and voice as one might respectfully give place to the spirits of his fore-elders, should they visit his midnight fireside.

For who knew the truth and this also was of life.

Burns wrote short songs, and so I, and for the same reason. A wandering and broken life, full of failures, chastened by poverty, with days of toil calling for nights of sleep, gave no time for applied devotion to prolonged themes. When the golden moments of rest and passion came, then I wrote.

Says the Fore Word: Songs of my winged thoughts, of life, nature, love and liberty; composed, not for the public, but my own pleasure — on the plains, in the forest, in the wake of the plough, on horseback, on the crowded street, by the bedside of death, in the storm, the silence of midnight, and when the face of the God of Morning blushed through the golden tresses of Dawn.

The fire burned within, the flames sang, and the free winds fanned them to music.

From the harp of fire, with the wind's touch, came these, and the writing of them was my joy and easement.

Only lately did the thought of publication come to me as other than a remote possibility, but now I have selected, from the hundreds I have written, one hundred of the most representative of my poems to be placed in one book with the title, "Wind-Harp Songs."

Now, I am sure that I am not alone in life and experience, and that my thought, whatever, must be the thought of many others. As I read books chiefly for the insight they give me into the lives of their authors, and care more for the emotion of the poet than even for the song itself, so I am sure, if I say something about a few of the "bit sangs" in my book, I shall not tire, but shall even interest.

And the same faith and the same interest have constrained me to make all my songs egoistic. I write of myself, but I speak perchance for the race.

I know that every poet, voiceless or spoken, will understand my proem and its aspirations:

Give me a finding thought, a subtle state, a vivid word.
Let me within the veil, and let me learn!
With every sun that burneth to its hills of sleep I burn,
With every leaping lightning flash I yearn; —

Ah, would that I might be a singer, too!
That this half-kindled music in my soul
Might burn melodiously athwart the scroll
Of human memories, an fadeless view!

I would my song could kiss with lover's lips!
Could weave all charms whereby men's thoughts are drawn,
And speak to shaken hearts a guiding word!
My lay could paint the sea with wind-sped ships,
Paint waiting skies with herald fires of dawn,
And breathe a bugle-note to souls unstirred!

The title of the book is from the first poem: "The Wind-Harp Song."

I sing a wind-harp song,
Dreamily musical,
Strange and faint and clear;
Beneath the steady stars
Thro' the dim, sweet night
Floating,
Mystically floating.

Nature is full of music to me, mental and audible, of weird psychometric tales and associations, one after one to infinity, and it is with this melody and mystical romance that this song is charged and of which many others in the book treat. To catch this music of Nature, perfect, ineffable, forever elusive, is the deepest yearning of the true poet. To read that music aright is to know all truth.

This little thing I find every woman endorses:

This is the secret wish,
The prayer of womanhood:
"Give me a friend who reads my heart!
Let me be understood!"

And as the poet's realm is the emotional, and as woman is the incarnate poem, it is not strange that many of these songs treat of Woman and Love. The love of her whose companionship was to me so perfect, whose death was the closest touch of tragedy I have yet known, inspires three of them, — "My Lady Gentle-Wonderful," "Only a Memory," and "My Dead." The death of my wise and gentle mother names another, thoughtful and questioning of future things. Love proper I have treated of in almost every phase, from the melancholy of "A Song of Sad Love," "A Sonnet to a White Lady," and the tenderness of "You Stood!" to the playfulness of "Cupid," the ecstasy of "Twenty Kisses," and the amorous passion of "I Love My Love in the Morning," which last Dr. Aikin likened to a song of Hafiz; from the rude romance of "O Love Was Red" to the caressive daintiness of "Wild Roses and Maiden Hair" and the triumphant enjoyment of "Chocolate." And, of course, my peculiar views of love and sex tint many poems, as "My Women," "True Love," "Love Is a Riddle," and others. Some of these love-songs are of experience, some of observation, some of hearsay, some of pure imagination. I cannot distinguish; the reader must guess. In "Emily Dickinson" there is a tribute of admiration; in "Cleopatra" the only touch of the dramatic; in "Remember" a reminiscence; in "A Knife of Agate" a grateful response; in the latter parts of "So We Care Not" cynicism.

The songs are in all styles, in nearly every meter and manner. Almost every one can find something that suits him, but the purist will be aghast at license and perversity, at wilful variations and faults in the midst of almost conformity.

Of Death, the Great Contrast, there is the song of "The Valley of Silence," "Mother," "In a Cemetery," and others.

Of distinctively radical and free-thought poems there are not many in the book. Only enough to clearly but not aggressively express my views and position. Art, after all, is the main business of the artist, not polemics; and art relates to pleasure and charm. Yet, if not aggressively present, liberty tints everything in the book, as might be expected of a volume whose dedication is "To the Free Spirit."

As I am more of a savage than a civilizee, a primitive man in essence, it is not strange that many of these songs are of nature, and in these I, myself, take chief delight.

Among these, one of my most dainty and fastidious critics has given first place to "Nature and I Are Glad."

The days are leaden and purple in stain,
And laced with bars of a sweet, dark rain,
And the brows of men are heavy with pain,
But Nature and I are glad.

The fields are sketched and etched in gray,
With charcoal shadows of night-in-day —
O why do men hate such? — tell me, pray!
For Nature and I are glad.

But I, myself, like better "In a Prism."

I sat on the ground,
Today,
With a hound;
And he was the brother of me.
Exceedingly
Beautiful were his eyes,
Gentle and merry and brown.
Ah, it was sweet to be down
On a level with him and all things there,
In the grass.
We, who are tall,
How much of pleasure we pass!
Of the joy which the little and earth-close know! —
Is it not so?

O soul,
There is room!
We are free!
In the inness of things there is room,
There is room in the wind and the sea,
There is room in the crowds of the tree,
In the multitudes of the grass.
There is welcome for me
In the beauty of things;
In the sunset
I am home.

I have not escaped the fascination of the majestic procession of the seasons, and their impression is here recorded in such songs as "The White Swan of Winter," "Cherry Blossoms," "Fireflies," and "I Dream in the Amber Autumn."

This is the sestet of "A Winter Morning Walk," — and I feel sure it will please those to whom I now write:

Hold we but hope of souls untouched of tether,
And pace in step with Nature's mood alway,
For health and wit and happy-thought and love,
No matter be it fair or falling weather,
Or skies be black or skies be bright above,
The morning is our youth and Spring of day.

I have always been a passionate lover of the fall.

When the palette is painted with sadness,
Fire, sweetness, and passionate breath,
On a background of purple distance,
With the blood tints and ashes of death,

I am tranced in the mellow misting
Of the amorous atmosphere,
And the slumberous warmth and languor
Of the smoky and golden air;

And I dream in at-one-ness with Nature,
Stained through with her beauty and pain;
I am drunk with the wine of her color,
With the pangs of her deaths I am slain.

Many of the poems relate to my sojourn in Florida. When I read "The Voice of the Turtle," I once more find myself in the cotton field among the yellow blossoms of the "long staple," while the old mule jogs before, the sand parts before the shovel plough, the gentle breeze sways the Spanish moss on the girdled trees, the sun flashes from the still waters of the bayou, and the "piney woods" are musical with the incessant plaint of the cooing doves.

"The Mock Bird" calls up visions of dazzling mornings and of groves of waxen-leaved orange trees, where this bold and musical mocker, secure in man's love and his own dauntless courage, lived without fear or care.

In "The Whoop-Crane's Clangor" the reminiscence is more savage:

Along the lone Floridian fens,
Wild, scrub-wreathed sands and hammock Edens,
Croaks the importunate, clanging cry,
From out the painted, sunset sky,
Of whoop-cranes, as they roostward fly.

And in "Hail Comrade!" I salute my true and gentle neighbor, Evald Hammar, who left Florida before I did, for "the land of grass, snow, and Swedes," as he happily described Wisconsin. Dear old Hammar! modest, big-brained, soft-voiced, great-hearted, do you remember how you used to sit across the hearth in "Overlook" and play the "Frithiof Saga" and "Torgney" on the violin, and sing of the "Skärgards Karlen" and "Fredman's Epistles"? Do you remember our standing ankle-deep in the black mud by the Ocklawaha, from which we had been "toting" the "alligator beer" all day to water Joe Blodgett's cabbages, and how you looked at me with comical gravity, all tired, wet, and muddy as we were, and said in your quaintly-accented English,

"Don't we look like two *fee*-losophers?" I remember, and how the sun went down behind the cypresses of "the Island," and the alligator chuckled to her young among the bulrushes.

But there are limits even to the vanity of a poet, and I stop.

O Poetry, thou art to me
As destiny!

Whoso sends me his name I will thank.

J. Wm. Lloyd.

Is Tyranny a Necessity?

"For a long time I have turned over in my own mind some of the extreme deductions of Anarchy, and have come to the conclusion they will not stand. In other words, I have come to the conclusion that the question of social organization is as much a question of geography as of numbers, and that therefore compulsion, not necessarily invasion, is unavoidable; that is to say, I cannot think of Chicago as a mere voluntary society. There she stands, with her splendid harbor, her many public streets, with her million and a half of citizens crossing and recrossing each other at a thousand points. I cannot think life possible under such circumstances except by recognizing the municipality, the corporate body which has the power over a certain territory, to enforce order and secure protection. Mind you, I am willing to admit that perhaps nine-tenths of the political functions might be dropped, but after that there is still a sentiment at the bottom of the problem which refuses to yield to purely voluntary influence. Take as simple a question as throwing a banana peeling on the sidewalk, thereby jeopardizing the limbs and lives of pedestrians. . . . It seems to me that among our rights is that of free locomotion accompanied with the smallest possible amount of danger. If this be true, then why should the municipality be restrained from passing an ordinance prohibiting careless people from throwing their peelings on the sidewalk?

"Tell me, have you never had any doubts lately along the same lines as that expressed above?"

The above is an extract from a letter to a friend. The questions which the extract contains, however, need, it seems to me, to be discussed by Anarchists so as to clarify the atmosphere and make plain the how and the when of the establishment of Anarchism. Following is the answer which I make to my friend. It does not cover the whole ground, but other readers of Liberty may do that more fully.

"No, my views about Anarchism have not changed for several years. The doubts you indicate never entered my mind, because I am a firm believer in progress, and that progress, to insure social harmony, must be towards individual sovereignty, towards Anarchism. The reason why, probably, I have had no doubts of the soundness of the doctrines of Anarchism is because I have not assumed that its ultimate realization would be in your day or mine, but that by gradual and, I hoped, easy steps it would be attained sometime; when, I have never dared to predict.

"The fundamental concepts of Anarchism are absolutely sound. To me they present three things, — *viz.*, that each individual should exercise the right of complete sovereignty, that each individual should own absolutely all the results of his own efforts, and that nothing which is not the result of human effort should be subject to unlimited ownership, or, in other words, that the results of human effort only should be property.

"I never assumed that with our limited knowledge of today any Anarchist could, or would, dare attempt to settle all the objections, real or hypothetical, which might be made. Only the State Socialists, the authoritarians, can do that. The Anarchist is frank enough to admit that he is not gifted with supernatural foresight. He is willing to leave the problems of a hundred years hence to those who will live then. What is it they say about sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof?

"To me Anarchism is not a dream; that all we have to do is to go to sleep and let it come. Come it will, of course, in obedience to the law of necessity. A sphere will roll down hill in obedience to the law of gravity, but its speed may be accelerated by human effort.

"Anarchism is the most practical problem of today. We are now writhing in misery and in mental agony over the injustices that are practised on every side due to laws that invade our social and industrial rights. What more practical thing for relief than to remove these laws? 'Ah! but how?' I am asked? 'Any way,' is my reply. Each individual must himself choose his own way. The democrat (not the political bastard who throws up his hat for the party, but the real democrat, he who believes that the best government is that which governs least), who struggles for the repeal of bad laws; the dynamiter, who resists the encroachments of governments with violence; the non-resistant, who believes that evil contains the germ of its own destruction; the plumb-line Anarchist, the practical opportunist, who accepts every opportunity to give government *per se* a blow near its vitals, — are all factors in the struggle for liberty and equity.

"The admission you make — that nine-tenths of the political functions might be dropped — may bring us so much relief that the other tenth would be of very little concern, provided the nine-tenths included those things which are invasive and meddlesome."

Joseph A. Labadie.

The World Waits for a Real Altruist.

[George E. Macdonald in Truth Seeker.]

Faith, hope, and charity are not greater than duty, humility, and self-sacrifice. (1) By working the Duty racket, conscientious persons may often be induced to assist the undeserving, who are as a rule the persons most profited by the exercise of that virtue; for which reason they are the most persistent in pointing out its demands. (2) In the practice of Humility we assure the author of our being that his works are imbecile, which must be somewhat humiliating to him. It is well that the Most High should occasionally be called down. (3) Self-sacrifice means that we must deny ourselves small favors and temporary pleasures in order that we may enjoy those which are great and enduring. It follows, then, that he who most sincerely desires to exercise the virtue here discussed will content himself with the lesser benefits, and, by a supreme act of self-sacrifice, forego the everlasting reward.

The Value of Mutual Money.

To the Editor of Liberty:

In No. 305 of Liberty you raise the topic of how mutual bank notes are to be kept at par, which needs ventilating. Greene would depend wholly on the customers' contract to take them at par with silver. But this could not do the work unless plenty of silver were circulating alongside them. Greene recognizes this, and would maintain a silver circulation by having the bank issue no note for less than $5 ("Mutual Banking," p. 52). But I doubt whether people can thus be forced, under freedom, to use coin wholly or mainly for the denominations between 50 cents and $5. Neither do I think, if all this circulation were in coin, that there would be enough of it, compared with the amount afloat in notes, to compel the notes to measure themselves by it.

I confess that I do not quite understand your present description of the way it is to be done. I wish you would explain more fully.

A few weeks ago I undertook to expound and defend mutual banking before an economic club. In preparing for this, I for the first time persuaded myself that there was a clear and comprehensible way for keeping those notes at par. At the club meeting I made such an impression on a professor of political economy as I hadn't expected to. He said that people ought to have a chance to try it, and that the notes might be expected to be good; only he insisted that they must depend on mutual confidence among the people, while I thought they had something behind that to fall back on. But he was specially pleased (he volunteered the statement) with my doctrine of the relation between the notes and the standard of value.

I proposed that, supposing the standard to be gold, the property pledged to the bank as security should be appraised in gold, not in currency; and that the loans offered should never exceed a certain ratio to this appraisal — so many dollars in notes to so many ounces or dollars of gold value in the security. Such a uniform ratio could best be maintained by agreement among the banks. Then, so long as the ratio is uniform, the supply of notes will bear a steady relation to the amount of property held by those who use the notes. Their need of money will furnish a similarly steady demand. This steady supply and demand will keep the value of the notes at a steady ratio to the gold in which the property was appraised. By careful adjustment of the ratio between notes and property an exact par with gold could be had; but this seems to me so unimportant that I should not think it worth the trouble of adjusting the ratio. What we need is not money at par with anything else, but money whose value, measured by a definite commodity standard, is uniform. Paper that is always at thirty per cent. discount is as good as paper that is always at par.

My plan, as you see, is quite independent of whether any other money is or is not to circulate alongside the mutual money.

Stephen T. Byington.

Is the Typewriter Girl to Blame for This?

[Hudor Genone in Open Court.]

Bewail his fate as much as you please who struggles with adversity, and moralize over the happy tho' humble home and the tender welcome and the sweet kiss at nightfall to the weary toiler, I tell you more men than one would think go from the bosom of their office where all is peace to a cold, heartless, and censorious family.

Wait for the Overt Act.

[Chicago Times.]

It is hardly worth while for the legislature to pass a law to define Anarchy and punish Anarchists. A man has quite as much right to say that he believes no government better than any government as one has to say that this country would be better off with a king or emperor than as a republic. If the merely theoretical Anarchist tries to become practical, the existing laws for the punishment of conspiracy, riot, murder, manslaughter, or arson are quite enough for the protection of society. Senator Hamer's bill is wholly unnecessary.

The Politician.

I'm a statesman, I'm a shouter,
A spell-binder, and a spouter;
I can talk nine ways for Sunday in a minute.
I can conjure up the voters,
The lunatics and floaters;
When there's any dirty scheming, I am in it.

I cajole with Hans and Mike,
And do exactly as I like;
My friends all come to me to grind their axes;
I fix them for a fee;
It's all the same to me;
For the people think it's fine to pay their taxes.

When we've had our costly "go,"
And the treasury 's getting low,
All we have to do is simply raise the rate.
With more of joy than woe
They to their pockets go;
For the mulligrubs admire the glorious "State."

I promise them protection,
High wages, and perfection,
And tell them of our lovely "Yankee Nation."
I never heave a sigh,
But live exceeding high,
While they hump themselves to get a half a ration.

I of patriotism brag,
And wave the striped rag;
At the numb-heads I am laughing in my sleeves.
I am always for myself,
For office and for pelf;
I'm a member of the "Brotherhood of Thieves."

I control the people's money,
And they think it very funny;
I help myself to either more or less;
And, beside this money-raking,
What other bribes I'm taking
I leave you howling Anarchists to guess.

Anna K.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Bordentown, N. J.

Members and friends will note the change in my address.

To the man who doesn't join the A. L. W. C. because he doesn't care enough for Anarchism to take the trouble.

DEAR SIR, — Do you mean to say that you do not realize the great importance of the Anarchistic idea? Sit down and figure a minute on the economic side. Make an estimate of what is directly stolen from the people by government. That is the smallest part. Then see how much the private monopolies maintained by government get; that is the next smallest. Finally, add to these the amount which governmental oppression absolutely prevents the people from producing, and which not even the thieves get. Then see if in the grand total there is not money enough at stake to impress the mind of any one who has a proper American respect for the dollar.

Then consider what there is in Anarchism besides money. Remember that the ability to command a pecuniary competence is not the most important or most necessary of the conditions of human well-being. (That is the most important thing that Single Taxers don't know.) See what you know about the influence of government on general intelligence. See what you know about its influence on morality, in how many things it promotes a groundless and pernicious strictness of practice, in how many other things it sustains a vicious laxity. Think of the thousand and one miscellaneous little things which have so much to do with any man's happiness and usefulness, and what government does toward increasing the vexations and cutting off the reliefs.

Now put down the items in government's favor, — start with the good fun one has in laughing at it, and go on to whatever else you can think of on that side, — take a fair balance, and see if the business of overthrowing government can fairly be classed among things of little importance.

But perhaps you acknowledge all this, and ask me what of it. As an Egoist, you propose to consult your own comfort. You quote Carrard Auban's wife, who was asked what she had done to make the world happier, and answered: "I have been happy." You choose to work in the same department, you say; why not?

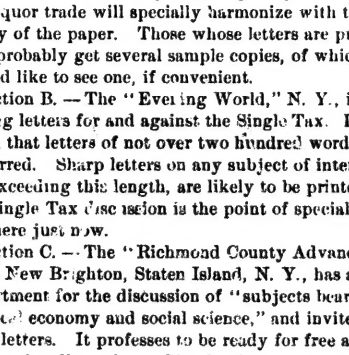
That is all good Egoism, so far. But there is nothing contrary to Egoism in my expressing my opinion of you. Let me say, then, that I don't much like you. I am glad of your happiness, but I can't appreciate a man who, when he sees things going wrong, is happier in letting them be than in trying to set them right. I don't sympathize with a man of such tastes. I am sure I should be bored if I had to spend much time in your company. My conscience, as a Moralist, will not allow me to call you "mean" or "low" or anything of that sort when I profess to be talking Egoism; but Mr. Tucker, who, as an Egoist, has no conscience, is probably ready to supply you with such and stronger epithets, at whatever expense of Egoistic propriety. At any rate, I can be sure of my ground when I say that your tastes do not harmonize with mine.

For I assure you, on my conscience, that for my own part I find great satisfaction in fighting for the cause of logic and of general happiness. I wouldn't take your comfortable ease as a gift, while this foot ball field is within my reach. I would sooner tackle an Archist half-back than eat quail on toast; and, if I get a nose-bleed by bucking against the government's center rush, I don't care a cent as long as we gain two yards. If you will take any advice of mine, just give the game a fair trial.

Target, section A. — "The South-West," Cincinnati, Ohio. An item in the "Single-Tax Courier" for January 24 says: "'The South-West' recently stated editorially that its columns were open to a discussion of the Single Tax, but so far none of our opponents seem disposed to present their side." Give the Single Taxers a little opposition, if they want it. If any one objects to writing against the Single Tax, letters supporting the principle of liberty in any respect ought to be well received, and any opposing the prohibition of the liquor trade will specially harmonize with the policy of the paper. Those whose letters are printed will probably get several sample copies, of which I should like to see one, if convenient.

Section B. — The "Evening World," N. Y., is publishing letters for and against the Single Tax. I understand that letters of not over two hundred words are preferred. Sharp letters on any subject of interest, not exceeding this length, are likely to be printed; but the Single Tax discussion is the point of special interest there just now.

Section C. — The "Richmond County Advance," West New Brighton, Staten Island, N. Y., has a department for the discussion of "subjects bearing on political economy and social science," and invites brief letters. It professes to be ready for free and progressive discussion. Give it whatever you have that is good, brief, and clear, especially pointing to the causes of poverty. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.



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